

**FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF VALLEY HILL STATION 4, HENDERSON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS STATION CONSTRUCTION GRANT
FEMA # EMW-2009-FC-00669R**

BACKGROUND

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for FEMA, Subpart B, Agency Implementing Procedures, Part 10.9, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared Pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ; 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The purpose of the proposed project is to construct Valley Hill Station 4 in order for Valley Hill Fire and Rescue to better serve and protect its communities in Henderson County, North Carolina that are compliant with national standards. An EA was prepared to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Valley Hill Fire and Rescue has applied for Assistance to Firefighters Station Construction Grant program funding under application number EMW-2009-FC-00669R. FEMA provides funds under this program for activities that help build new or modify existing fire stations in order for departments to enhance response capabilities and protect the community from fire and fire-related hazards.

Two project alternatives were explored in depth in the EA for construction of Valley Hill Station 4: 1) No Action and 2) Preferred Action Alternative:

The preferred action alternative is to add an additional station to the Valley Hill Fire and Rescue District in order to provide faster emergency response to the Valley Hill and Laurel Park communities. The addition of Valley Hill Station 4 will reduce response time by an average of five to six minutes for the referenced communities. The Valley Hill and Laurel Park communities continue to grow in population and lack a nearby fire and rescue station that can provide an eight minute or less response time. Therefore, constructing Valley Hill Station 4 in the proposed location will better serve the Valley Hill and Laurel Park communities.

The No Action alternative would result in continued deficient emergency response times for industrial facilities, commercial facilities, and residents of the Valley Hill and Laurel Park communities. Not only could this have a significant impact on the health and well being of these communities, but fire insurance rates will likely continue to increase resulting in an additional burden to the citizens and businesses of the underserved communities.

A public notice was posted in Hendersonville Times-News on November 12, 2010 and the draft EA was available for review for a period of 15 days at the Valley Hill Fire and Rescue Head Quarters, the Laurel Park Town Hall, and the Henderson County Fire Marshal's Office. The draft EA was also available online at the <http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/ea-region4.shtm> website. The public was invited to comment on the proposed action and the draft EA. No comments were received from the public during the 15 day comment period.

FINDINGS

The preferred action as described in the EA will not adversely impact geology, groundwater, floodplains, wetlands, environmental justice, threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, hazardous materials, or socioeconomic resources. During the construction period, short-term impacts to soil, downstream surface water, traffic, air quality, and noise are anticipated. All short-term impacts require utilizing best management practices to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts to the proposed project site and surrounding areas.

CONDITIONS

Any change to the approved scope of work will require re-evaluation for compliance with NEPA and other Laws and Executive Orders.

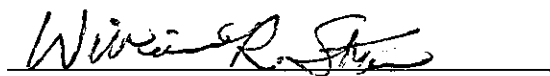
In accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations, the applicant is responsible for acquiring any necessary permits prior to commencing construction at the preferred project site. All permit conditions and/or Best Management Practices must be followed.

If ground disturbing activities occur during construction, applicant will monitor ground disturbance and if any potential archeological resources are discovered, will immediately cease construction in that area and notify the State and FEMA.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the EA, coordination with the appropriate agencies, comments from the public, and adherence to the project conditions set forth in this FONSI, FEMA has determined that the proposed project qualifies as a major Federal action that will not significantly adversely affect the quality of the natural and human environment, nor does it have the potential for significant adverse cumulative effects. As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10.9) and the preferred actions as described in the attached EA may proceed.

APPROVAL



William R. Straw, Ph.D.
Regional Environmental Officer

Date 12/09/10